

SURGICAL GOWN CONFIGURED FOR PREVENTION OF IMPROPER MEDICAL PROCEDURES

CROSS REFERENCE TO PRIOR APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. application Ser. No. 12/008,818, filed Jan. 14, 2008, which is incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

BACKGROUND

[0002] 1. Technical Field

[0003] This invention relates generally to medical gowns, and more particularly to a gown configured to facilitate prevention of improperly performed medical procedures.

[0004] 2. Background Art

[0005] Healthcare facilities are increasingly concerned about the occurrence of errors in medical and surgical procedures. As a result, more attention is being turned to the activities of the medical personnel prior, such as a surgeon and operating staff, prior to the commencement of a procedure, such as surgery. Some healthcare facilities request medical professionals to check and double check certain conditions, such as whether the proper procedure is being performed or whether the patient undergoing the procedure is the same patient for which the procedure was scheduled. Despite these warnings, it can some times be difficult to remember to check and double check each condition.

[0006] It would be advantageous to have equipment configured to prevent the start of a medical procedure until each of the checks was complete.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] FIG. 1 illustrates a front view of one embodiment of a medical gown configured in accordance with one or more embodiments of the invention.

[0008] FIG. 2 illustrates a rear view of one embodiment of a medical gown configured in accordance with one or more embodiments of the invention.

[0009] FIG. 3 illustrates a front view of one surgery procedure verification card configured in accordance with embodiments of the invention.

[0010] FIG. 4 illustrates one or more packaging embodiments suitable for medical gowns and drapes configured in accordance with embodiments of the invention.

[0011] FIGS. 5 and 6 illustrate one or more applications for medical equipment employing procedure verification cards in accordance with one or more embodiments of the invention.

[0012] FIG. 7 illustrates one method of using embodiments of procedure verification cards configured in accordance with embodiments of the invention.

[0013] FIGS. 8 and 9 illustrates methods of making and using embodiments of medical gowns and drapes described herein.

[0014] Skilled artisans will appreciate that elements in the figures are illustrated for simplicity and clarity and have not necessarily been drawn to scale. For example, the dimensions of some of the elements in the figures may be exaggerated

relative to other elements to help to improve understanding of embodiments of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

[0015] Embodiments of the invention are now described in detail. Referring to the drawings, like numbers indicate like parts throughout the views. As used in the description herein and throughout the claims, the following terms take the meanings explicitly associated herein, unless the context clearly dictates otherwise: the meaning of “a,” “an,” and “the” includes plural reference, the meaning of “in” includes “in” and “on.” Relational terms such as first and second, top and bottom, and the like may be used solely to distinguish one entity or action from another entity or action without necessarily requiring or implying any actual such relationship or order between such entities or actions. Also, reference designators shown herein in parenthesis indicate components shown in a figure other than the one in discussion. For example, talking about a device (10) while discussing figure A would refer to an element, 10, shown in figure other than figure A.

[0016] In medical procedures such as surgery, professionals are implementing “pause procedures” in an effort to reduce or eliminate the occurrence of errors. These procedures, often known as a medical or surgical “time out,” are procedural pauses required to call attention to final safety checks that should be completed before beginning of a medical procedure such as surgery. These time outs are called to ensure that the correct medical procedure is going to be performed on the correct patient, at the correct site, using correct supplies, and on the correct side of the patient. To this end, some national organizations, such as The Joint Commission, have prepared a set of National Patient Safety Goals to promote specific improvements in patient safety. This particular group has developed “Universal Protocols” for preventing wrong site, wrong procedure and wrong person surgeries and other medical procedures.

[0017] Unfortunately, some staff are less than vigilant in following these protocols. Moreover, some medical personnel and health care staff even resist the safety checks by performing only a portion of the protocol or ignoring the protocol completely. Where a surgeon or other medical professional fails to participate in, or encourage the use of, a time out procedure, pressure is applied to the remaining staff. Particular pressure may be applied to the circulating nurse, as he is often responsible for making sure the time out is both complied with and properly documented when complete. He generally must do this prior to the commencement of the procedure, e.g., prior to the surgeon making an incision. Embodiments of the present invention provide a medical tool that can help ensure that both steps are completed accurately.

[0018] Embodiments of the present invention include a medical gown that has a procedure verification card attached thereto. For simplicity of discussion, surgery will be used as an illustrative example of one medical procedure for which embodiments of the invention are useful. However, those of ordinary skill in the art having the benefit of this disclosure will readily recognize that surgery is just one type of medical procedure and that embodiments of the invention are well suited to any number of other non-surgical, medical procedures. Accordingly, the adjective “medical” can be substituted for the adjective “surgical” when referring to embodiments described herein. For example, when referring to a